

Message Text

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44

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-15 MC-02 SAJ-01 EB-11 RSR-01 /110 W

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R 201637Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3445

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

CINCUSNAVEUR

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 09559

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SP, UK

SUBJECT: HARRIER SALE TO SPAIN

1. SALE OF HARRIER AIRCRAFT VIA U.S. TO SPAIN BECAME PUBLIC ON AUGUST 18 WHEN PRESS REPORTED THAT PENTAGON HAD DISCLOSED INFORMATION ON TRANSACTION ON AUGUST 17. HAROLD WILSON ISSUED A STATEMENT AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 18 DENOUNCING THE ACTION. WILSON SAID SALE WAS "AN OUTRAGE" AND NOTED FASCISM AND GIBRALTAR CONFLICT AS REASONS SALE SHOULD NOT BE CONSUMMATED.

2. FOREIGN SECRETARY RESPONDED IMMEDIATELY WITH STATEMENT THAT IT IS HMG POLICY TO SELL THE AIRCRAFT TO SPAIN. GOVT POSITION BASED ON POINT THAT "WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY AND GOOD FOR WORKERS IN THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY TO PROMOTE EXPORT OF OUR HIGH TECHNOLOGY AIRCRAFT..."

3. ALL NEWSPAPERS AND TV NEWS REPORTED ON SALE AUGUST 19 AND 20 INCLUDING FILM CLIPS OF HARRIER TRIALS ON SPANISH
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AIRCRAFT CARRIER. MOST NEWSPAPERS AUGUST 20 CARRIED

EDITORIAL COMMENT WITH ONLY TWO - GUARDIAN AND EVENING STANDARD - OPPOSING SALE. TONE OF MOST COMMENT WAS THAT UK NEEDS THE BUSINESS FOR INDUSTRY AND LABOR AND THAT PROBLEMS RAISED BY WILSON NOT PERTINENT IN THIS CASE.

4. COMMENT: WILSON'S STRONG REACTION IS INDICATIVE OF CONTINUING LABOR NEURALGIA ABOUT SPAIN. HE IS RETURNING TO LONDON EARLY FROM HOLIDAY TO TRY TO REVERSE DECISION TO SELL. LABOR PARTY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONDUCT STRONG CAMPAIGN AGAINST SALE BUT WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE IT WILL SUCCEED AS CABINET DECISION IS REPORTED TO BE ABSOLUTELY FIRM.

SOHM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY AIRCRAFT, PRESS COMMENTS, MILITARY SALES
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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SOHM
Errors: N/A
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Office: ACTION PM
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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005